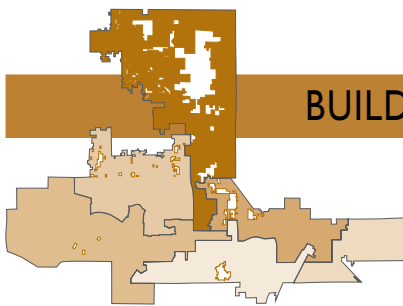


**Award Winning**

Las Vegas

# GROWTH WATCH



**BUILDING LAS VEGAS INTO A WORLD-CLASS CITY**

## Las Vegas Hosts International Home Builders Show

BY IRENE PORTER

The Southern Nevada Home Builders Association (SNHBA) played a major role in showcasing our great community during the

giant National Association of Home Builders' International Builders' Show in January. A record 92,000 people attended the convention.

SNHBA organized and coordinated the convention's "Housing Tours" to four new subdivisions underway in the valley. Several thousand attendees signed up for one or more tours to the model-home complexes. Participants traveled around the valley in the comfort of motor-coach buses, accompanied by knowledgeable SNHBA members. More than 100 SNHBA members served as volunteer guides on the tours to ensure the enjoyment of our guests.

In addition, the Meyers Group, a national research firm and SNHBA member, put together an informative guidebook about our community and the homes on the tour program. Another member, First American Title Company, provided a high-energy video featuring dynamic images of Las Vegas for tour-goers during the bus ride.

The visitors saw the innovative, creative and quality housing being built



*More than 1,000 manufacturers and suppliers exhibited during the convention.*

to meet demand in one of the fastest growing areas in the country. In 2002, local homebuilders sold a near-record 22,502 new homes in metropolitan Las Vegas. With building permits up by 4 percent as of December, 2003 looks to be another good sales year.

The tours presented many other Las Vegas assets. Tour participants drove past our beautiful communities, modern schools and public facilities, bustling retail and office centers, diverse houses of worship, and significant infrastructure construction.

SNHBA also hosted a seminar at the convention. The session featured the innovative and successful partnership

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

### Winter 2002-2003

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# HOME BUILDERS

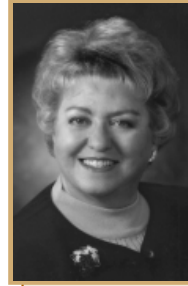
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between the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Research Center and the SNHBA to bring the National Housing Quality Trade Contractor Certification Program to the area. More than 100 local trade-contracting companies are now in various phases of the program. Eight trade contractors have achieved the highest level of certification by the NAHB Research Center. A first of its kind, the Las Vegas partnership is serving as a model to implement this quality assurance

program in other cities in the country.

The SNHBA members introduced the convention visitors to one of Las Vegas' finest assets – our people. Tourgoers encountered pleasant, professional, and courteous local citizens, from our members serving as tour guides to our builders' sales and marketing staffs in the model homes.

The people, places, and information presented to the guests may draw them back to visit the wonderful Las Vegas valley again soon.



## GUEST CORNER

*Irene E. Porter has served as the executive director of the 750-member Southern Nevada Home Builders Association for more than 25*

*years. Prior to joining SNHBA, Porter was project manager for American Nevada Corporation's Green Valley master-planned community and director of planning for the city of North Las Vegas.*

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

### CHANGE UNDERWAY TO PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

Customers should quickly see the benefits of a change to the pre-application process in the Current Planning Division.

Customers are now encouraged to drop off conceptual plans or other essential project materials prior to scheduling a pre-application meeting. During the pre-application meeting, a planner assists a customer in understanding the indi-

vidual requirements of each unique project submittal, and customers recognize that the sessions can eliminate costly project delays later.

Now, by providing materials to the Planning and Development Department in advance, customers may enjoy a more comprehensive pre-application meeting. The planners can be better prepared to meet with the client by researching pertinent codes, gathering parcel background information, and establishing the necessary steps based on the initial project information. The planning technicians will often be able to prepare the aerial maps and determine the radius for project notification so that the customer can review them at the pre-application meeting.

Afterwards, the customer will have ample time to provide the necessary submittal requirements. All of the materials will assist the planner in preparing a thorough staff report. Ultimately, the department hopes to find fewer abeyances at Planning Commission meetings. In addition, the process should better manage the time constraints of staff deadlines.

Customers have responded favorably to the new process as planners on the front counter explain the benefits of getting materials in ahead of time. For more information, please contact one of the planning supervisors, David Bratcher at (702) 229-5408 or Dave Clapsaddle at (702) 229-2082.

## PLANNER'S PERSPECTIVE

### DEPARTMENT COMPLETES RANCHO CORRIDOR REVIEW

Residents and property owners will have a better understanding of possible development along Rancho Drive, based on plans stemming from a recent review of the corridor.

Before the area became part of the city in 1963, Clark County designated a continuous strip for general commercial development, with C-2 zoning, along most of Rancho Drive from Vegas Drive to Moccasin Road.

The magnitude and diversity of the corridor more recently prompted the City Council to request that the Planning and

Development Department study possible changes to the zoning. Staff established four distinct segments along Rancho Drive for purposes of the study: 1) Vegas Drive to Gowan Road, 2) Gowan Road to Lone Mountain Road, 3) Lone Mountain Road to Ann Road, and 4) Ann Road to the northern city limit at Moccasin Road.



*This Bureau of Land Management office represents the type of transitional use sought between intense commercial areas and residential neighborhoods.*

Staff determined that the clustering of commercial districts would allow for transition zones between the most intense

commercial uses, such as auto sales and repairs, and existing residential areas. Office or multi-family residential uses can provide buffers between commercial and residential uses. Where possible, property adjacent to existing residences could become limited commercial, a category that includes retail, restaurants and services beneficial to the residents. Some parcels remain unchanged, available for undesignated development in the future and for general commercial uses that do not adversely impact adjacent properties.

A neighborhood meeting attracted over 30 residents to review the recommendations. Based on some concerns regarding proposed changes within segment 1, staff anticipates presenting revised recommendations for that area later this year. The Planning Commission and the City Council will act upon the recommendations for the other segments during upcoming meetings.

# STATE OF THE CITY: THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Citizens attending the State of the City event in January learned about upcoming projects that could indicate "the best is yet to come" for Las Vegas.

The session began with an overview of the new parks, community centers and infill projects built last year, and colorful slides highlighted the changes happening downtown. The Lewis Avenue plaza and the City Park adjacent to the historic post office bring open spaces to the urban area, while the Neonopolis complex invites tourists and residents to enjoy dining, shopping and entertainment. New law offices and residential projects are also helping to revitalize the city core.

The presentation included a number of other projects that may indicate a good year ahead. The former Union Pacific Railroad land near U.S. 95 holds considerable promise. The Chelsea outlet mall, on track for an October opening, expects to draw nearly 8 million people during the first year of operation. The World Market Center's home furnishings complex, the Furniture Mart, plans a groundbreaking event in March. The proposed \$1 billion project has nearly 200 leases already signed with



The Arts District features unique shops.



The new City Park added much needed open space in downtown.

furniture, carpeting, antiques, and tile companies from throughout the world. The project will help generate a diversified economy, along with future development on the city's 61 acres nearby.

The burgeoning Arts District downtown also offers potential. The S2 Art Center lithography studio and the Arts Factory galleries and studios distinguish the area. Antique shops and boutiques are moving into the district, with some storeowners living and working in the same buildings. With plans by Tinoco's Bistro to relocate there and support by the city for special events, the Arts District will attract both residents and tourists.

The State of the City event provided the ideal venue to announce a project with developer Irwin Molasky to build a \$25 million Internal Revenue Service office downtown. Molasky, a former critic of the city's redevelopment efforts, plans to build the project on five acres of land adjacent to the 61 acres. The office should bring about 500 people a day into downtown.

Some challenges loom ahead for the city, with the tax proposals by the state and increased competition in gaming and tourism. However, steps taken in recent years tightened budgets and cut costs while maintaining adequate

services. The city manager's office plans to look into ways to continue to reduce expenditures and pursue "public-public partnerships" with other government agencies. While the city has entered into a number of successful public-private partnerships, opportunities may exist to coordinate services and improve cost-efficiencies with local entities.

With all of the past accomplishments and pending projects, citizens and staff alike may find that, indeed, "the best is yet to come."

## Las Vegas GROWTH WATCH

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For additional copies of Growth Watch visit us at:  
[www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us/comprehensive\\_planning.htm](http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us/comprehensive_planning.htm)

## COMPROMISE REACHED FOR POPULATION ESTIMATE

The city of Las Vegas has reached an agreement with the state to establish the city's population at 514,640, representing a 2.3% increase over the previous year's count.

The state demographer initially estimated Las Vegas' growth through July

1, 2002, at less than 1%, for a total population of 508,109. The city determined a count of 520,936, for a 2.9% growth rate, and followed an appeal process with other entities that led to the compromise. The new figures determine local allocation of some federal and state funds.

The estimates vary due to differences in the methods used to determine the figures. As a result of the appeal, a technical advisory committee will be established to develop mutually-supported methods for future estimates.

[www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us](http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us)

City of Las Vegas • Planning and Development

Growth Watch Winter 2002-2003



## NEWS BRIEFS

# TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT AWARDS RECOGNIZE CITY PROJECTS

Several new city projects received the 2002 Tourism and Development Award at the 19th annual Governor's Conference on Tourism in December. The awards recognize new and expanded facilities in Nevada that attract visitors or provide jobs.

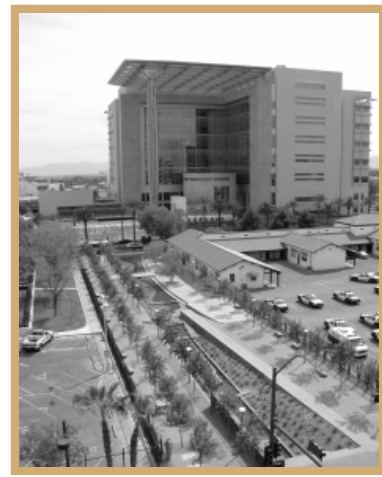
The city of Las Vegas won an award for the new Lewis Avenue Corridor project, where a flowing waterway and a landscaped plaza attract tourists to the downtown area. The Planning and Development Department initiated and directed the design phase of the corridor project. The Department of Public Works oversaw the construction work.

Two other downtown sites, Neonopolis and the S2 Art Group, also won awards. The city partnered with the private sector on the projects, providing a parking garage under the Neonopolis entertainment complex and assisting Jack and Carolyn Solomon to relocate from New York to open the S2 Art Group.

The city of Las Vegas is one of only two local municipalities to win the tourism awards from among 128 organizations recognized in the state.



A Tourism and Development Award went to three downtown projects (clockwise from above): the S2 Art Center lithography studio, the Lewis Avenue Corridor urban plaza, and the Neonopolis entertainment complex.



# PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTS NEW OFFICERS FOR 2003

Participants of the Planning Commission meetings will see a change in the leadership for the seven-member board.

Richard Truesdell now serves as chairman. Truesdell, owner of the Cornerstone Company, began service

on the commission in January 2000 and served as vice chairman for the past two years.

Stephen Quinn steps into the role of vice chairman. Quinn is the owner of Precision Construction, Inc. and is serving his second term on the Planning

Commission. His first term began in August 1996.

Outgoing Chairman Craig Galati remains an active, voting member, with a term continuing until 2005. The commission typically changes officers every year.



Chairman Richard Truesdell (left), and Vice Chairman Stephen Quinn (right) now preside over the Planning Commission meetings.



# UPDATED TITLE 19 IS NOW AVAILABLE

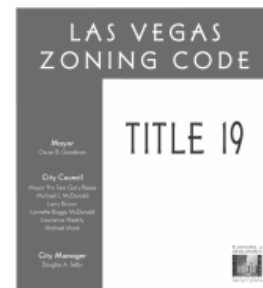
Customers can refer to a more current version of Title 19 now that the Planning and Development Department has completed numerous updates to the zoning code.

The revised document is available for review and purchase at the Development Services Center, 731 South 4th Street. Production is underway to make the code updates accessible online at [www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us](http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us).

The new zoning code replaces the version known in the past few years as Title 19A. The Las Vegas City Council adopted ordinances that completed the transition.

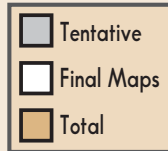
For further information, please contact the front counter for the Plan-

ning and Development Department at (702) 229-6301.

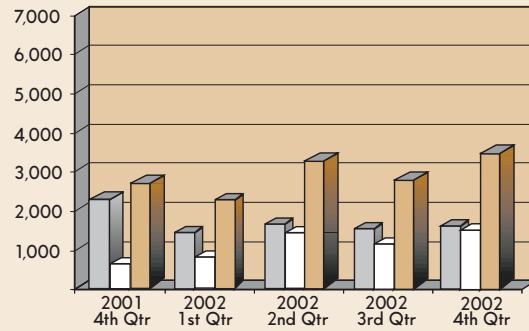


The updated zoning code includes recent sign regulations.

# 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Figures

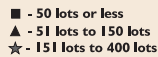


Approved Subdivision Lots



Approved Subdivision Lots			
	Tentative Maps	Final Maps	Total
4th Qtr-2001	2,122	502	2,624
1st Qtr-2002	1,383	657	2,040
2nd Qtr-2002	1,642	1,408	3,050
3rd Qtr-2002	1,624	1,092	2,716
4th Qtr-2002	1,644	1,585	3,229
% Chg Last Qtr.	1.2	45.1	18.9
% Chg Last Year	-22.5	215.7	23.1

APPROVED FINAL  
SUBDIVISION MAPS  
BY WARDS



## Leading Economic Indicators For Clark County

"The Southern Nevada Index of Leading Indicators (SNILI) inched upward for December, largely a result of increased visitor volume and taxable-sales collections. Indeed, six of the ten series contributed negatively to the current index. The SNILI dropped sharply after September 11, and it has remained on a slow course of recovery ever since. The current SNILI shows signs of continued modest growth during the first quarter of 2003."

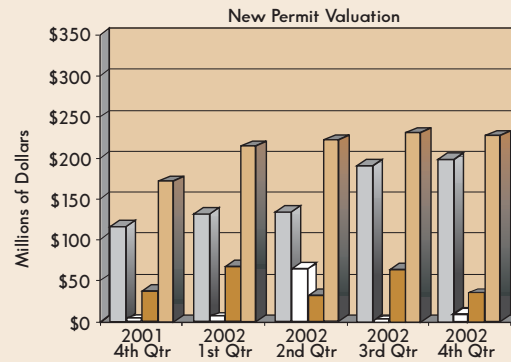
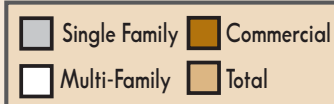
Leading Economic Indicators Source: UNLV Center for Business and Economic Research

\* The index is a six month forecast (April 2003) from the month of the data (October 2002) and four months from the month of the series (December 2002).

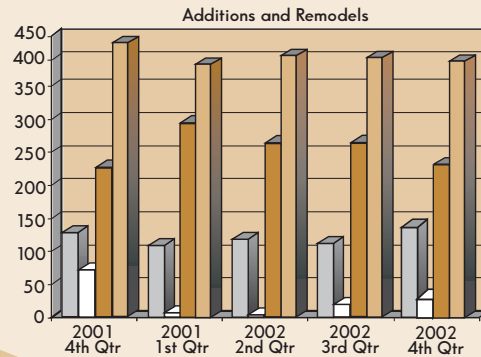
\*\* The contribution to the Index is a net-weighted average of each series after adjustment for seasonal variation.

Leading Economic Indicators						
CLARK COUNTY SERIES	DATE	UNITS	LATEST PERIOD	CHANGE PREVIOUS PERIOD	CHANGE YEAR AGO	CONTRIBUTION TO INDEX**
<b>RESIDENTIAL BUILDING</b>						
Units Permitted	Oct-02	# Permitted	2,454	2.89%	30.74%	-0.002%
Valuation	Oct-02	Dollars	\$255,852,408	1.18%	23.80%	-0.014%
<b>COMMERCIAL BUILDING</b>						
Permits	Oct-02	# Permitted	90	40.63%	0.00%	-0.027%
Valuation	Oct-02	Dollars	\$64,134,401	62.69%	83.85%	-0.016%
<b>TAXABLE SALES</b>	Oct-02	Dollars	\$1,951,480,977	-0.85%	2.98%	0.164%
<b>McCARRAN AIRPORT</b>	Oct-02	Passengers	3,118,481	10.35%	11.95%	-0.006%
<b>GALLONS OF GASOLINE</b>	Oct-02	Thousands of Gallons	57,392,988	5.56%	7.32%	-0.017%
<b>GROSS GAMING</b>	Oct-02	Dollars	\$654,478,229	1.75%	6.371%	-0.099%
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>						
Visitors	Oct-02	People	3,014,582	9.61%	4.19%	0.101%
Attendance	Oct-02	People	374,727	46.83%	2.51%	0.001%
<b>OVERALL CHANGE *</b>	Dec-02		127.91	0.12%	0.86%	0.12%

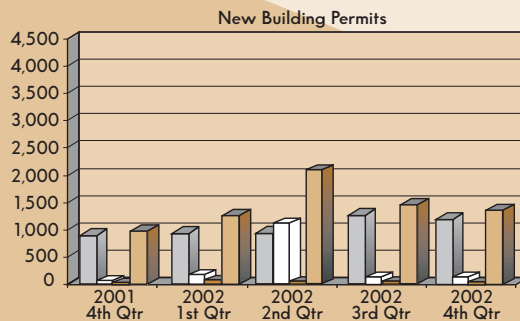
# 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Figures



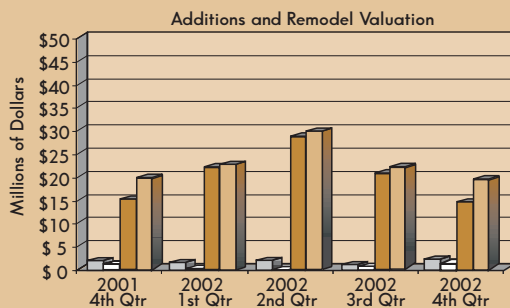
New Permit Valuation				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
4th Qtr - 2001	\$114,041,727	\$3,700,339	\$42,644,891	\$160,386,957
1st Qtr - 2002	\$132,583,469	\$9,278,685	\$65,654,458	\$207,516,612
2nd Qtr - 2002	\$136,173,044	\$59,694,156	\$24,451,505	\$220,318,705
3rd Qtr - 2002	\$180,493,027	\$2,778,714	\$62,223,286	\$245,495,027
4th Qtr - 2002	\$190,524,624	\$7,811,524	\$29,172,987	\$227,509,135
% Chg Last Qtr.	5.6	181.1	-53.1	-7.3
% Chg Last Year	67.1	111.1	-31.6	41.9



Additions and Remodels				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
4th Qtr - 2001	129	74	228	431
1st Qtr - 2002	100	9	278	387
2nd Qtr - 2002	133	2	259	394
3rd Qtr - 2002	114	18	260	392
4th Qtr - 2002	128	24	218	370
% Chg Last Qtr.	12.3	33.3	-16.2	-5.6
% Chg Last Year	-0.8	-67.6	-4.4	-14.2



New Building Permits				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
4th Qtr - 2001	844	63	32	939
1st Qtr - 2002	935	140	47	1,122
2nd Qtr - 2002	952	1,117	40	2,109
3rd Qtr - 2002	1,371	86	42	1,499
4th Qtr - 2002	1,196	85	42	1,323
% Chg Last Qtr.	-12.8	-1.2	0.0	-11.7
% Chg Last Year	41.7	34.9	31.3	40.9



Additions and Remodel Valuation				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
4th Qtr - 2001	\$1,743,525	\$458,880	\$14,966,114	\$17,168,519
1st Qtr - 2002	\$1,585,789	\$36,000	\$22,063,323	\$23,685,112
2nd Qtr - 2002	\$1,904,380	\$7,000	\$28,716,672	\$30,628,052
3rd Qtr - 2002	\$1,453,320	\$461,592	\$19,309,533	\$21,224,445
4th Qtr - 2002	\$2,042,803	\$615,456	\$14,390,828	\$17,049,087
% Chg Last Qtr.	40.6	33.3	-25.5	-19.7
% Chg Last Year	17.2	34.1	-3.8	-0.7

Source: City of Las Vegas (including subdivision information)

## LAND DEMAND STUDY FORECASTS SHORTAGE IN NORTHWEST

People dreaming of a future move to the northwest part of the valley may face the reality of a land shortage, based on a recent study completed by the city of Las Vegas.

Planning and Development Department statistical analysts have determined a potential deficit of more than 10,000 acres, if growth in the area



An aerial view of the Ann Road and U.S. 95 interchange shows small amounts of undeveloped land.

continues at current rates over the next 20 years. The study fulfills a requirement of the inter-local agreement between the city and the county.

The region, with a unique mix of suburban and rural neighborhoods, a town center concept and proximity to recreation areas, offers a lifestyle that should continue to remain strong in the future. The study applies constant growth rates through 2021. An average of 9,300 people added to the area each

year since 1995 yields an additional 186,000 people by 2021.

At the current density of 12.3 people per acre, the projected population requires 15,122 acres of residential land. In addition, for every acre developed residential, approximately one acre of land (.97) is developed for commercial and public purposes, bringing the total demand to 29,790 acres.

With the amount of vacant land in the study area estimated at 19,073 acres, a projected deficit of 10,717 acres exists. Filling the demand will require policy adjustments that either allow higher density on existing vacant land or increase the amount of land available for development.

Without policy changes, a large portion of the population may not have access to their preferred choice of housing location.

## CITY ANNEXES TO PREPARE FOR GROWTH

The city of Las Vegas acted upon the provisions of a state bill and annexed 675 acres of land to prepare for future growth.

Assembly Bill 179, adopted as NRS 268.597 Number 1 (b) & (c), permits a city to annex undeveloped territory as of January 1, 2001, if 75 percent of the

external boundaries of the land are contiguous to the annexing city.

The City Council pursued the annexation to provide for more effective planning and provision of services. The action reduces the opportunity for non-conforming land use decisions on property adjacent to city land. The annexation also eliminates split rights-of-way, with portions of streets constructed and maintained by different jurisdictions.

The annexed area is made up of "county islands," land surrounded by city

of Las Vegas parcels that were governed by Clark County. City staff identified 126 parcels for the annexation process. More than 75 percent of the combined territory bordered the city, as required by the Nevada Revised Statutes. The subject parcels would have required annexation upon development to receive city sewer services.

The annexed land reduces the size of remaining county islands or provides contiguity to other parcels for possible annexation in the future.

## SMARTER GROWTH

## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK POSITIVE, CAUTIOUS

The resiliency of the local economy may indicate a fairly positive year ahead, according to the report given at the annual Southern Nevada Economic Outlook in December.

However, the forecast, prepared by the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, sets forth conservative growth rates for 2003. The economy recovered better than expected from post

2001 drops, and 2004 may see even stronger growth rates.

The basis for the outlook comes from recent results, which defied a number of projections. During the past year, the Las Vegas valley experienced growth in population, employment, visitor volume and gaming revenue, all strong indicators of the local economy. Even with growth rates below the area's boom numbers, the area's performance is still

the envy of many U.S. markets, according to Dr. Keith Schwer, director of CBER.

The overall economic slowdown and cyclic patterns of construction led to a decrease in residential and commercial construction in the valley in 2002. Low interest rates, continued population growth and economic recovery may drive construction up at a healthy pace in the year ahead.

The CBER presentation also covered potential risks to local conditions. War or additional terrorist acts could alter the economy and derail the forecast. Another unknown influence is the proposed solution to Nevada's state budget gap. The gross receipts tax effectively influences every transaction, according to Schwer. The tax may also be regressive, comprising the largest percentage of income for the poorest sectors of the population.

Southern Nevada Forecasts for 2003-2004			
Indicators	Growth Rate		
	2002	2003	2004
Hotel/Motel Rooms	0.8%	1.9%	1.9%
Visitor Volume	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%
Population	5.7%	3.4%	3.0%
Total Personal Income	5.0%	5.8%	6.3%
Gross Gaming Revenue	0.5%	2.3%	2.9%
Housing Units Permitted	-3.0%	4.9%	4.2%
Clark County Employment	1.9%	3.1%	3.5%

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research

## **PLANNING PROFILE**

# **DEPUTY CITY MANAGER ELIZABETH FRETWELL OVERSEES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**



*Deputy City Manager Betsy Fretwell oversees six city departments.*

Elizabeth “Betsy” Fretwell assumes a more active role in city zoning and planning projects now that she is directly responsible for the Planning and Development Department. Fretwell also oversees the Administrative, Fire and Rescue, Detention and Enforcement, Leisure Services and Neighborhood Services Departments.

Fretwell’s experience with planning encompasses several positions during her career. While working for Clark County, Fretwell coordinated countywide

strategic planning activities, including the commission’s planning sessions. She also was involved in extensive public policy and organizational analysis, performance measurement, and business planning. As acting project coordinator of the Southern Nevada Strategic Planning Authority, the predecessor to the Regional Planning Coalition, she organized the initial and ongoing activities of the authority.

Fretwell served as lobbyist for Clark County during two legislative sessions, acting as chief lobbyist in 1997. The

work led to a position as intergovernmental relations director for the city of Henderson. She served as the city’s chief lobbyist and headed public policy and program research and development.

Joining the city of Las Vegas in 2000, Fretwell is now responsible for leading community services and special projects within the organization. She also coordinates strategic planning and business planning efforts and works on a variety of other special projects, including public-private partnerships, regionalism, cross-functional activities and community relations.

Fretwell holds a bachelor’s degree in political science and a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Georgia. She is a member of several professional and community organizations, including the National Conference for Community Justice, the International City/County Managers Association, Local Government Managers of Nevada, and the Community Associates of Women’s Studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She is also part of the new leadership program of the UNLV Women’s Research Institute.

## *Las Vegas* **GROWTH WATCH**

Winter 2002-2003

City of Las Vegas  
Planning and Development Department  
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